

ST. HELENS MIST

FOUNDED 1881

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THE COUNTY OFFICIAL PAPER

THE BUDGET.

On another page of this issue will be found the County Budget as prepared by the County Court, wherein they estimate what the probable expense of the county will be for the next year. These figures are based very largely upon what were the expenses last year and in the main, are apparently just about what will be required to conduct the affairs of the county. Taken altogether the general levy required to raise the amounts specified in the budget will approximate 19 mills, or a fraction under. Just how these will be divided can be ascertained by a little figuring. In addition to the general levy of approximately 19 mills there will be taken into consideration the special school and special city levies, which in this district amount to 13 mills. Therefore if the Court makes the levy according to the estimates of the budget, the property in St. Helens will pay 32 mills, or 1 1/2 mills more than last year. In Vernonia a special levy of 20 mills for school, a city levy of 5 mills and a special road levy of 6 mills will make a total of approximately 50 mills or 5 per cent.

The figures are given in the budget, all itemized so that it is not hard to compute what the levy will be in each district, provided the general levy is as estimated in the budget. It is the duty of every taxpayer in Columbia County to take the budget and study it. Figure out what the cost of government is. Look over the various items and see where, in your judgment a cut can be made, if at all. Then when you have arrived at your conclusion as to where changes should be made, decide then and there, that you will attend the meeting to consider the budget on the 29th of December and make your recommendations to the Court. This is a duty devolving on every one of you and if you do not perform that duty you will have no one to blame but yourself if your taxes are higher than you consider they should be.

The County Court has worked hard and faithfully to prepare this budget for your information. They are doing what, in their judgment, is necessary for the best interests of the county. They want the recommendations and suggestions of the people and they invite you to attend the meeting. It is up to the taxpayer to do his duty.

ORGANIZE.

For the past two or three years there have been organized in Warren and Scappoose, Taxpayers Leagues, having for their object, the study and discussion of various matters of public interest to the taxpayers. Meetings have been held when occasion required and much good has resulted from the meetings. Now it is proposed to make a county Taxpayers League, with local organizations in the various localities, so that the people will all meet at some place and discuss matters of public concern.

Such a move should receive the hearty support of every taxpayer in the county. The success of the two organizations at Warren and Scappoose, go to show that every community should have a like organization, and that a general county organization to meet as occasion demands would no doubt bring good results.

Conditions at the present time, with the people as the law makers and having a voice in all public affairs, make it necessary that each and every citizen be informed. That each person have the best means possible to secure all the information to be had. That organization and concentration of effort are necessary to achieve best results. By all means let the people of Columbia County organize and get together. The results will be far greater and more for the common good than any one can realize.

"TOOK A CHANCE."

The verdict of the jury in the case of Firebaugh vs. St. Helens Lumber Company, was a just rebuke to an adventurer. One of the men closely and prominently identified with the prosecution of this action stated before the jury came in, that they did not expect to win, that they had a chance to get something from a jury and took the chance. The trial of the case took up the time of the Court for three days. The jury sat through three days listening to the evidence and the arguments. The cost to the county was several hundred

dollars. The cost to the St. Helens Lumber Company was several hundred dollars. The cost to the plaintiff was practically nothing, as he no doubt had an attorney on a contingent fee basis and all he had to pay was the statutory costs.

The action of the jury in finding a verdict for the defendant will have a very salutary effect on other adventurers. It showed that a Columbia County jury cannot be induced to return a verdict for an adventurer, and it serves as a notice to other adventurers that unless there are reasonable grounds upon which to ask for damages, it will be useless to take a chance. While there is no way to keep a man from bringing a suit and putting the county and others to considerable expense, a few verdicts of this kind in such notoriously uncalled for cases, will have the effect of preventing a recurrence of many of them. The jury men who returned the verdict are to be commended for their action.

TOO MUCH OVERHEAD.

Two hundred and seventy-one thousand is a good many dollars. When the people of Columbia County decided to bond the county for \$360,000 it was in the call for election, on the ballot, and in the petition that \$260,000 of that amount was to be used for the purpose of building a road from the Multnomah County line down the river, following the old road as nearly as possible, so as to avoid dangerous curves and steep grades, to the Clatsop County line. That \$260,000 which the people said was for that road, has already been expended and \$11,000 more. Of course the amount has not all been paid out because the contract calls for the withholding of 20 per cent, but that amount has been earned already, and on that portion of the road from Tide Creek to Clatsop County, a little more than one-half the distance, and there is no road either. On the other portion of the road there has not been a dollar of the bond money spent. It now appears that for the work already done it will take all the bond money being held back and also all of the road money in the special funds to pay the bills.

There is no denying the fact that the road work the past year has not been satisfactory. The work that has been done on the Columbia Highway from Tide Creek down, is not what it should have been for the money, by considerable. Even though the money was all spent on only a portion of the road, the results are not in keeping with the expenditures.

The principal reason for this loss can be traced to the fact that there was too much overhead expenses. A corps of engineers being paid high salaries, has used a considerable amount of the money, and their work has not been satisfactory to anybody who has investigated it. There are too many salaries being paid to men who do the county or the road building no good. Their heads should be lopped off.

CONTRACTING EXPERTS.

The branch of the Secretary of State's office known as the Insurance Department, is also the auditing department of the various counties. Under the present law it is the duty of that department to expert the books of the various counties of the state and for which services the various counties pay the bill. It is rumored, and the rumor has such a persistency that it seems to be taken for granted by people from the state at large who have investigated the affair any, that this work of experting the books in the various counties has been let by contract to an accounting firm of Portland, at an agreed and stipulated price. It has been asserted that the price contracted by this firm is much less per day than is paid by the counties and that some person is making considerable profit from this experting contract.

Whether or not such a state of affairs is true we are unable to say, but the fact that two men working on the books of this county last month, one of them for about 30 or 35 days, and another for about 10 or 12 days, were paid the sum of \$636.00 for those services, makes it clearly apparent that some experting along the line of checking up on the State Experting department should be made. The fees charged by the experts are exorbitant, and if the state department has a contract for doing the work at a much less figure, that department should give to the counties the benefit of the contract price. There are plenty of good expert accountants in the state who could and would give just as good service for a considerably less sum and the State Accountant should see to it that the work be done for a reasonable amount.

When there is nothing to say what is the use of saying it.

When money comes easy it does not tarry long.

ADVERTISED LETTERS.

Letters unclaimed at the St. Helens, Oregon, postoffice for the week ending December 5, 1914.

Babbitt & Noyes.
W. H. Cooper.
Mr. Earl Horton.
Mr. Jimmy Hicks.
Mr. John Stone.

Letters unclaimed by December 19, 1914, will be sent to the dead-letter office.

IVA E. DODD, P. M.

DURING THE AGES

Good Jewelry has been conceded to be a most appropriate

XMAS GIFT

Good Jewelry is my Line

Come in and make your selections while the selecting is good.

EXPERT WATCH REPAIRING.

VON A. GRAY

Jeweler. ST. HELENS

BATHS AT KALEVA ROOMING HOUSE

Russian Baths

Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturday afternoons; Wednesday and Friday forenoons. Turkish bath is open every day.

I promise to frighten rheumatism out of your body with steam heat and massage.

Mrs. A. Saari

ST. HELENS, - OREGON.

St. Helens Fish Market

CHAS. COOPER, Prop.

FRESH FISH
OYSTERS
CLAMS
and
CRABS



Salt and Smoked Fish

Lunch

At

Masons

Waffles

Sandwiches

Short Orders

Confectionery

Ice Cream

KODAKS

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DEMING'S DRUG STORE

Rexall and Nyal Goods

Christmas Bargains

We are certainly giving bargains in Christmas goods. We endeavor to give bargains in everything we have to sell, especially in

OUR 15 CENT HOSE.

We guarantee every pair.

Heavy Stadium Outing Flannel 10 cents a yard. Special Mora Hair Ribbon 4 1/2 inches wide, 13 cents a yard. Curtain Scrim, 12 1/2 cents a yard.

Hand-Made Cream Chocolates

30 cents a pound, and our Christmas candy will be 15 cents a pound, no more. There is no need to mention toys, as everybody is aware that we are

The Leading Toy Shop of the City. Give us a trial and be Convinced.

NOAH'S ARK

ST. HELENS 5 AND 10 CENT STORE.



Electrical XMAS

Inexpensive and appropriate gifts for everyone.

FULL LINE OF
General Electric Guaranteed Toasters, Chafing Dishes, Irons, Radiators, Etc.

Toasters \$3.75

Irons \$3.50 and \$3.75

Life guarantee with every Iron.

Toy Motors for the boys at \$1.45 and Pocket Flash Lights \$1.15 up.

For the home what nicer than a modern two or three light electric shower. Installed in place \$4.40 and \$6.25.

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OPPOSITE THE POSTOFFICE.

SPECIAL FARES TO PORTLAND.

Oregon Poultry and Pet Livestock Show

PORTLAND, DECEMBER 7 TO 12.

Make Your Headquarters at the

New Perkins Hotel

RATES WITH BATH, \$1.50.
POPULAR PRICE RESTAURANT.

JUST A LITTLE WAY FROM THE SHOW ROOM